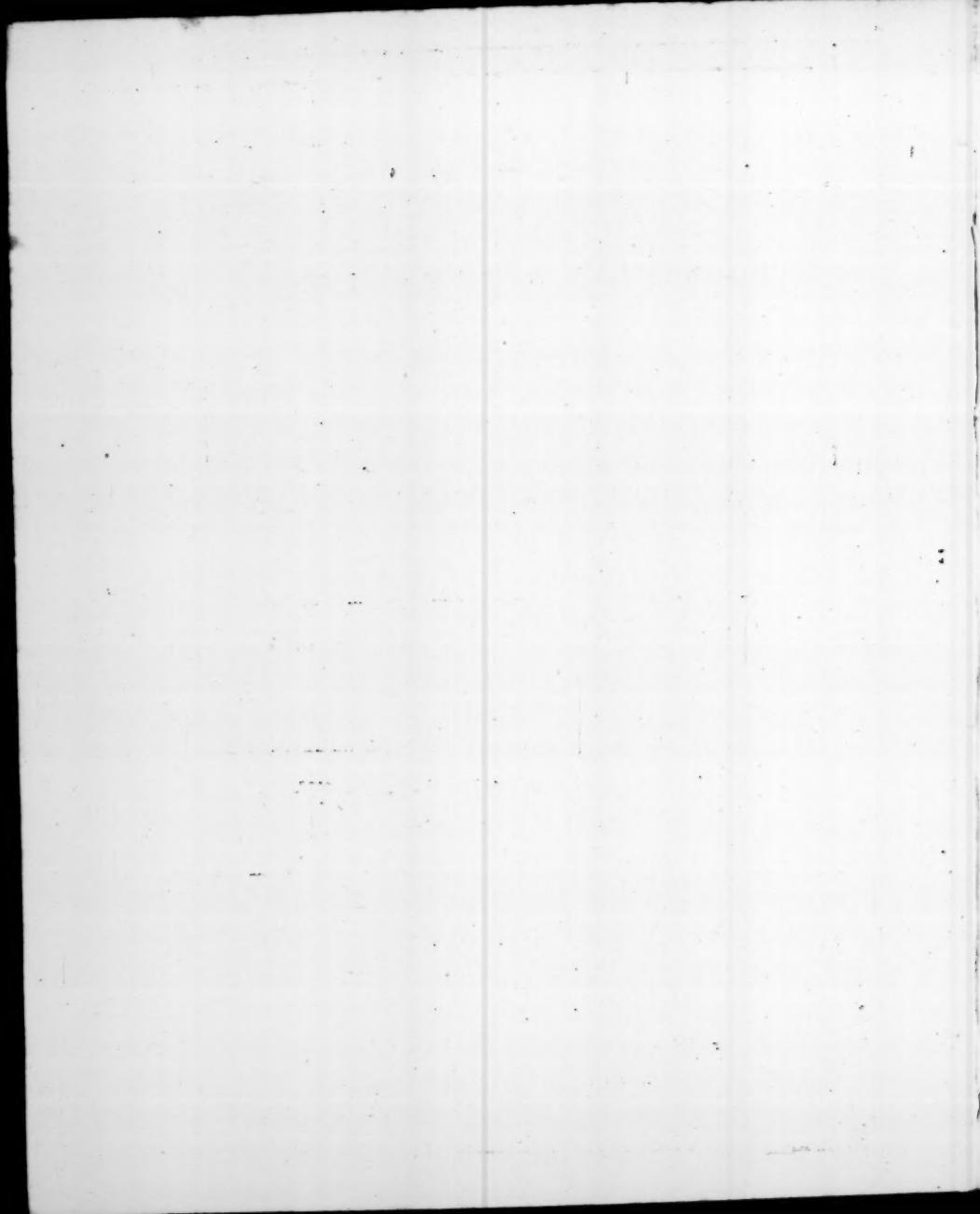


A
SERMON
PREACHED
Before the
King and Queen
A T
WHITEHALL,
Jan. 19. 1689.

By *J. LAMB*E, Chaplain to Their
MAJESTIES.

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A

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the
KING and QUEEN.

P R O V . xxii. 4.

*By Humility, and the fear of the Lord,
are Riches, and Honour, and Life.*

Lord, who will shew us any Good : is the general Enquiry , the universal Question of all Mankind. Every being pursues its own perfection, and would fain be satisfied in all the Capacities it understands, and in all the importunate Appetites it feels. Desire and Want are the misery of Life, but Good or Happiness, is the free enjoyment of things convenient to us, the gratification of all the genuine dispositions of the true and proper

inclinations of our Nature. But such is the ignorance and depravity of Man, that we are not so sensible of the nobler and more excellent Capacities of our Minds, as we are of the sensible and more obvious goods of the natural Life. To preserve and defend that being we have acquired, to enrich our selves with all such things as please the Body, and conduce to the ease of our Lives, and to secure our Acquisitions, by a fair reputation in the World, by the hearty good will, esteem and love, of all that know us ; this is the general design of all Men, these are the practical Principles of every individual Person. But the perfection of the Mind, the improvement of our Reason, the Government of our Will, the fear of God, and the preparation for an Eternal Life hereafter ; these, because they are intellectual, invisible, and future, are commonly less regarded, too often lost, and swallowed up of sense.

Wherefore God, who loves and seeks our Happiness, even more than we our selves, allows to our Imperfections, gives us His Laws as we can bear them, and draws us insensibly to Virtue and Obedience, by annexing those good things, which we all perceive, admire
and

and prosecute, to the practice of those Moral Duties, which are equally our Happiness, but not so easily discerned. And thus of his Goodness he leaves us to the knowledge of our Souls, and draws us to himself, our chief and most absolute Good, by the means of those sensible things, which we understand, esteem and love; *For By humility, and the fear of the Lord, are Riches, and Honour, and Life.*

The Proverbs of Solomon are the Emanations of the great understanding, which God had bestowed upon him, above all the Men ^{1 Kin. 3:12} that ever lived; the most perfect rules of Wisdom, for the Government of humane Life; piercing and awakening of the Mind, consented to of all, as soon as the words are understood. They are generally independent one of another, but compleat and full in every period. This before us encourages *Humility*, from the consideration of the great advantages we may reasonably expect, and are assured unto us from the practice of it, even all that is good and desirable in this present World, both *Riches, and Honour, and Life.*

Which words are a positive assertion of the certain effects and consequences of Humility, that is to say, that a modest opinion of our selves,

selves, and a cheerful submission to the will of God in all conditions, arising from a pure and perfect Principle of Religion, and the fear of God, will procure us Wealth and Honour, and secure the enjoyment of them both, with Peace and Pleasure, to a good old Age. *By Humility, and the fear of the Lord,* by such an Humility, as proceeds from the fear of the Lord, *are Riches, and Honour, and Life.* So that the Text consists of these two Parts.

I. A Duty recommended, *Humility with the fear of the Lord.*

II. The Reward proposed to enforce and encourage the practice of it, *are Riches, and Honour, and Life.*

I begin with the first, the Duty recommended. *Humility, with the fear of the Lord.* And for the clearer and more perfect illustration of it, I shall briefly consider these two things.

1. The definition, the nature, and principles of Humility in the general. And

2. The several parts and exercises of Humility so defined.

1. I begin with the *first*, the definition, nature, and principles of Humility.

Humility has a near relation to many Graces,

ces, but if we consider it by it self, as a single Vertue, it is, an habit or temper of Mind, proceeding from a Principle of Religion, or the fear of God, which subdues all lusty, false Opinions of ones self, and disposes a Man to a cheerful acquiescence, in all Estates and conditions of Life, that God shall place him in.

(1.) It is an habit of Mind, a frame or temper of Soul ; for a Virtue cannot be defined by single actions. Fasting, Weeping, and Praying, may be the effects of Repentance, a submiss Behaviour of Humility, or they may not ; because the outward acts, be they what they will, may proceed from divers causes, and are therefore good or evil, according to the intention of the Author : they are the Servants of many Masters, and receive their denomination from the inward Principle that produced them.

(2.) Again, Humility is such an habit of the Soul, as must be framed and wrought by a Principle of Religion, or the fear of God, for so sayes the Text, *By Humility, with the fear of the Lord, proceeding from a Principle of pure Religion, are Riches, and Honour, and Life.* God has commanded it, I will therefore study the goodness of it, that I may

love it, and chuse it, and endeavour to attain the perfection of it. Nothing can be a Virtue in us that we have not chosen. Dispositions of Nature may be rewarded, if by our care we preserve them uncorrupt; and they are very happy that are naturally well inclin'd, but the Virtue is far more perfect, to say no more, that is freely chosen, against the bent of our inclination; when reason exercises its proper power, and subdues unreasona-ble Appetites, devoted Customs, to the Obedience of God.

In our present instance, there is a depression of Mind in many Men by nature, an indifference to every thing, which is not so properly the grace of Humility, as a natural Necessity. Humility then is an habit or temper of Mind, arising, not from sinister respects, not from reasons without our selves; nay not from natural necessity, but from a principle of Religion, or the fear of God. And it chiefly consists in these two things.

First, In a modest, just opinion of our selves, and

Secondly, In a cheerful submission to the will of God, in all the conditions of Life, that Providence shall place us in.

First,

First, Humility subdues all lofty false opinions of our selves, of our own perfections and deserts. It is the exercise of our Reason in judging and valuing our selves and others : that we neither arrogate those qualities which indeed we never had ; nor magnify those we have, in our own conceit, above the degree of perfection we have attained, but that *we think of our selves as we ought to think*, as S. Paul describes the nature of Humility, *Rom. i 2.3.*

Every Man, by the instinct of his nature, would be more excellent and perfect than he is. God only is stable and immutable, desiring and wanting nothing, but we are weak and impotent, always craving and never satisfied ; weary of our own condition, as if we wanted something that was our due, and envying the condition of our neighbour, as if he had too much. God has therefore obliged us to Humility, or a just opinion of our selves and others, that we may be sensible of our own miscarriages, defects, and faults, as well as of the graces and good qualities of our Neighbour ; that we may be glad our own condition is so happy as it is, and ready to acknowledge the Excellencies, and be well contented with the Prosperity of others, as the same St. Paul

explains Humility, Phil. 2. 3. *In lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than himself.* That is the first.

Secondly, The second part of Humility respects our place and station in the World, and teaches us to submit with chearfulness to the will of God, under all the dispensations of his Providence. It moderates Ambition, regulates the desire of Worldly Goods, and disposes us to a grateful liking, to ease and satisfaction in the place we are in. Our desires will be higher or lower, according to the opinion we have of our selves ; but Humility subdues those false imaginations, which Pride and Vanity impose upon us. It shews us our weaknes, dependance, faults, and imperfektions, and inclines us to be well contented in our station, and to believe our selves to be very well provided. This is the definition, the nature, and principles of a Religious Humility, as it respects our Neighbour and our Selves.

There is another considerable part of Humility, that is exercised in a more immediate manner upon God Himself, and consists in the most honourable apprehensions of His Sacred Majesty, in the most sincere acknowledgement of our dependance upon Him, and Obligations

ligations to Him for Life, and all the comforts of it, in the most profound respect and reverence ; in the most obsequious addresses to him, in the deepest sorrow, in the greatest indignation against our selves, in the lowest demission of Mind, whensoever we offend him, together with all the outward expressions of our inward sense, that Nature, Reason, Custom, or Example, shall direct us to. But because this part of Humility towards God, is more easy in the practice, than the other ; there is no dispute between God and his Creature for preeminence , he understands our thoughts, and can easily punish our Pride and Arrogance: and therefore no Man, who believes his Being, does directly oppose himself against him, or set himself in competition with him. And therefore at the present, I shall only consider that part of Humility that is exercised upon our Neighbour and our Selves. And it chiefly consists, as you have already heard, in a modest opinion of our own deserts, and a cheerful submission to the will of God, under all the dispensations of his Providence. As Pride on the other hand is an over-weaning opinion of ones self, contempt and undervaluing of others, with a suitable ambition of Worldly greatness,

greatness, to assert and support this vain conceit. Thus Pride is explained by Arrogance, *Prov. 8. 13.* By Self-conceit, *Phil. 2. 3.* By a vain desire of Glory, *Gal. 5. 26.* and $\alpha\lambda\alpha\zeta\omega\nu$, one that boasts of his endowments, *Hesychius* explains by $\alpha\lambda\alpha\zeta\omega\nu$, a proud Man. Superbia, says St. Aug. *est perversæ celsitudinis appetitus (de Civ. Dei)* and he describes a proud Man thus: *He cannot bear to be subject to any: amongst his equals he affects precedence; and what he wants in merits, he will invade and force by flattering his superiors, envying his equals, and despising those below him.* Thus much for the definition, the nature, and principles of Humility in the general.

2. I proceed, as I proposed in the second place, to consider the several parts and exercises of the duty so defined.

The Vertue of Humility is one, and indissoluble, neither more nor less than a modest opinion of our selves, a cheerful contentation in our place, with candor, deference, and good will to all. But the practice upon these principles are as various, and infinite, as our capacities of expressing the sentiments of our Mind. *Vertue is one, says Seneca, neither less nor greater, but its species are many, which are express'd*

press'd according to the variety of life and actions. And in our present instance, I shall endeavour to illustrate the principal exercises of Humility, in these following particulars.

- (1.) In our *Desires* and *Aims*.
- (2.) In our *Looks* and *Gestures*.
- (3.) In our *Garb*, and *Habit*.
- (4.) And principally in our *Conversation*.

(1.) In our *Pursuits*, *Desires*, and *Aims*:

A Man that is truly humble in his own opinion, will moderate his ambition of Worldly goods, he will be always apt to think he has as much as he deserves, and ready to rejoice in the rewards of Virtue, upon whomsoever they shall light. If any good besals himself, he does not look upon it as his due, but as a kind encouragement to pursue that Virtue which he thinks he wants at present. But the desires of the proud are never satisfied; if once a Man can perswade himself that his deserts are great, he can never be pleased, till he has attain'd the reward which his vain conceit has set upon his merit. Besides, it is Power and Riches that nourish his Pride, that gratifie his fond opinion of himself, and force, at least, a dissembled honour from abroad. And therefore

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fore the vanity of his Spirit, will inflame his desire, after all such things as indulge and feed the humour. St. Aug. *says of Pride and Ambition*, that they are *so far one and the same*, as *Pride is never to be found without Ambition, nor Ambition without Pride.* (de Salut. Doct.) Is he made Tribune of the People, says Seneca, speaking of a proud Man, instead of returning thanks for that, he complains that he is not promoted to the Praetorship, nor would that content him, unless they chuse him Consul. Nay, the Consulship it self will hardly please him, unless he may rule alone. So true is that account which Solomon has given of him, *That he always expects to divide the spoil,* Prov. 16, 19. that is the first.

(2.) The second exercise of Humility is in our Looks and Gestures. A Man of an humble Mind, that is truly sensible of his own defects, will not estrange, or separate himself from his Neighbour. He does not delight in the distance of inferiour People, nor strike an awe upon them by an haughty look. He is always sensible of his own defects, and is therefore glad that his Neighbour will be free, and easy with him; extreamly pleased with a good acquaintance; with the intire and perfect Friendship of all about him. *Humilis ultimum*

se

se judicat, & blando vultu terram intuens, says St. Aug. he is so far from neglecting, much less from scorning any Man, that he addresses all with a clear and a cheerful Countenance, with freedom and courtesy, with sweetness and affability. Nay the very gestures of his Body well express the humility of his Mind, his motions are indifferent, easy, free and natural, without affectation or singularity; *& φυσιται*, says St. Paul, he is not puffed up, he is not swell'd with high conceit, he does not strut, and look down with contempt upon the World, but governs all his gestures by the rules of ingenuity, and the customs of the place. But the looks of the proud are affected, singular and scornful, *καρπανος*, a Man of Pride is he, *qui super alios appareat, ut se conspicendum præbeat*, one that looks over all the World, that he himself may be exposed to view. He uses all imaginable artifice to be seen, inquired of, and admired, though it be but of the simple. And thus the unreasonableness of Honour, betrays a Man, insensibly, into contempt and scorn; for we shall hear in the end, *that the humble Spirit shall inherit Glory; and not the Generation of Men, whose Eyes are haughty, and whose Eye-lids are lift up.* That is the second.

(3.) This inward habit of true Humility, will be visible in our *outward garb*, in our *way of living* in the World. A Man that is truly humble, does not desire to be talk'd of. He rather affects to be concealed. He is afraid lest those who read upon him, should observe more evil qualities than good; and therefore he always appears and lives, without design of observation, without any just provocation to envy, or evil will; but as a Man of his condition, according to the custom of his Country, may be supposed and expected to appear and live. But a garish habit, and a manner of living, that is above his quality or estate, is a certain indication of Pride and Discontent. He is sollicitous of publick notice, and shews, that he thinks it fit, and right, that he should be in a higher station than he is; and therefore he will thrust himself into the outward garb and habit of it, though with the utmost hazard. He that imitates the fashions of Men in Authority, Honour and Wealth, betrays his Ambition, though he makes himself ridiculous. That is the third.

(4.) And lastly, This inward habit of true Humility, will chiefly express it self in our *Conversation*,

First,

First, With our Acquaintance, Friends and Equals, a Man of an humble Mind is full of courtesie and condescension, forward and ready in all expressions of civility and regard to his Friend, even more than he himself expects. He is not emulous of precedency, but if place be undoubtedly his due, he rather accepts it in complyance with the œconomy of the World, than for any delight in the thing it self; according as St. Paul directs, Rom. 12. 10. *Be kindly affectioned one towards another, with Brotherly Love, in Honour preferring one another.* ^{1 Pet. 5. 5.} He despises no Man's judgment, nor obtrudes his own Opinion with rudeness, violence, or passion, though it may be never so clear or evident; He hears the discourse of others, with all civility and just allowance, if it be good and proper, without any visible dislike, much less affront, if it chance to be frivolous and impertinent. *He Gal. 5. 26. neither provokes nor envies any Man.* He does nothing through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, he esteems his neighbour better than himself. Phil. 2. 3. In a word, he is always jealous of his own judgment, and ready to say with Agar, Pro. 30. 2. *Surely I have not the understanding of a Man,* and is therefore well contented,

tented, if by all the Arts of Civility and Love, he may preserve a good understanding, and a kind acceptance in the World. But a proud Man is always full of himself, jealous of his reception, impatient till you understand how much he thinks himself above you. He expects that all the court should be address'd to him, that he should preside and rule over all the Company; that every Man should be of his Opinion, hear his Discourse, allow his Characters, endure his tediousness, commend his Wisdom, admire his Beauty, and add to the Character he gives or insinuates of himself: if you oppose him, you strike him to the heart; if you rebuke him, he becomes your Enemy, for so says Solomon, Pro. 9. 7. *Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee; rebuke a wise Man, and he will love thee.*

Secondly, Again, In his conversation with those that are any way *superior* to him. An humble Man has a low opinion of himself, and is satisfied in his station; he wishes he could deserve what he has, or more, but is well contented with the promotion of his betters; *He frankly rejoices with them that do rejoice,* and is really pleased with the prosperity of any Man. He is cheerful under Government, and

and loves the hand by which the benefits of ^{Eph. 5. 21.}
^{1 Pet. 5. 5.} the Commonwealth are dispensed unto him ;
he is sincere and free in all the Customary Ho-
nours that their place and quality require. But
a proud Man hates his Betters, his address is
forced, his outward Compliment is against his
will ; he abhors from his Soul, that the Ho-
nour and Wealth, which his vain conceit has
resolved to be due to himself , should be en-
joyed by another : and therefore he does what
he can to find a fault, to deprettiate his worth,
and to stir up Enemies : he is ready to carp at
his Abilities, vilifie his Manners, reflect upon
his Wisdom , undervalue his Estate, despise
his Person. Something or other to bring him
under obloquy , and level him with him-
self.

Thirdly, and lastly, In his Conversa-
tion with those *below* him. A Man of an hum-
ble Mind will be candid, civil, and ingenuous
in the highest stations. He hides his acciden-
tal lustre, with a true and a decent greatness,
and converses courteously with inferiour Men ;
He neither frights them from him by his Pomp,
nor discourages their approach by a forbidi-
ding look, but is easy of address, ready to be
spoke with, benign and chearful towards all.

He

He condescends to Men of low estate, (Rom. 12. 16.) Receives their visits, treats them kindly, accepts their Presents, helps them in distreis, as our Saviour *washed the Disciples feet* (Joh. 13. 14.) and obliges us, according to his Example, *to wash one anothers feet.* He accepts the services of his Servants with a chearful Countenance, and a civil gratitude; He makes their places easy, by shewing himself the Friend, as well as the Master of the Family. But a Man that is proud and potent, is the most intolerable Being upon Earth; he studies to make himself a terrour to all about him; he is pleased when he can appale them by a stern and cloudy Countenance. Nay so unaccountable is Pride with Greatness, that he does not know himself, what it is he expects from his Dependents. St. Aug. upon this account compares him to a *Ship that is tossed upon the Waves, without a Pilot.* What humour, lust, or passion, must be gratified to day, is uncertain; quite the contrary perhaps to Morrow. Who shall be next in his favour or displeasure, is hard to gues. If you please him, he is fre-quish in his favours; for his kindness to you, is only to use you as his Slave for a while; if you fall into disgrace, he designs and works your ruine.

De Salut.
Doc. lib.

These

These are the principal Acts, the necessary Effects both of Humility and Pride; wherever the Principle is, these will be the certain radical operations of it; we shall fall into them naturally, as occasion offers. Only in this, as in all other Vertues whatsoever, allowance must be made to the Passion and Surprises, to the Frailty and Imperfections of humane Nature. But where these outward acts are as stable and equal, as even and uniform as our present state permits, there, and there only, is the Virtue: for it does not consist in any particular thing, not in conversing with the Poor, not in an abject Countenance, not in a squalid Habit; but in an uniform practice of all the necessary acts of Humility, as occasion offers. It is this alone that is the Grace, because it is this alone that can never be acted or put on. It is impossible that Hypocrisie should be uniform, no Hypocrite can imitate so many several things. The Expressions of Humility are copious and infinite, and therefore are never to be taught or acted. But the Grace it self is an inward, living Principle, and will influence our outward Actions, easily, naturally, and without teaching.

Hence it appears, that Kings and Noblemen
may.

may be humble as well as others : they may use an outward Grandeur according to their Quality, and yet be very meek : for the Grace is within the Man ; he may possibly *endure*, rather than be conceited of his Equipage, much less a Despiser of others. No, we must take especial care to preserve the œconomy of the World, and the distinctions of Men, in all our Meditations of Humility and Pride, and endeavour, according to what has been said, to have a right understanding of both.

Thus, as briefly as I could, I have laid before you, as well the Nature and Definition, as the principal Acts and Exercises of a Religious Humility.

II. And I now proceed to the Second General, the Reward proposed to perswade and encourage the Practice of it : *By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life.* And here there are these two things to be considered.

1. That Riches and Honour and Life are a real Blessing, and the proper matter of Reward. And

2. That Humility with the Fear of the Lord will certainly procure them.

1. That

1. That Riches and Honour and Life, are a real Blessing, and the proper matter of Reward.

Happiness can be nothing else but the Satisfaction of natural Appetites, according to, and not exceeding the Intention of Nature. God has made us capable of variety of Satisfactions, and given us suitable Desires, and therefore want in any of these is Misery in proportion: for there is no notion of Misery, but Emptiness and Desire unsatisfied. What is contrary to our Nature, frets and grates us, but what is agreeable to our true and natural dispositions delights and pleases us; the one is called Happiness, the other Pain or Misery: and therefore the Goods of the World (comprehended here in *Riches and Honour and Life*) having a real value in them, in their order and degree, are proposed as the Reward of *Humility with the fear of the Lord*. If Temporal Blessings prove pernicious to us, as oftentimes they do, the Fault is not in them, but in us, in that we resolve our final Happiness into them, and set our Affections upon them, to the prejudice of our higher and more excellent Capacities. But they may be lawfully enjoyed to that degree that God allows, and are worthy of a just

pursuit in the way that he proposes, and that is, says the Text, *by humility, and the fear of the Lord.* This is the Method that God has appointed, and they that seek them thus, may expect to attain them.

(1.) By a natural Power and Efficacy in the Virtue it self.

(2.) By an Efficacy Moral; there is something in the practice of Humility, that disposes kindly to all those several ends.

(3.) By an efficacy Divine and Spiritual; the blessing of God will assist and forward the designs of the humble, that he shall ordinarily attain his ends, and live in Plenty, Honour, and Esteem, to a good old Age. *By Humility, and the fear of the Lord, &c.*

(1.) By a natural power and efficacy in the virtue it self. An humble disposition tends to Riches, procures Honour, and preserves Health.

First, It tends to Riches, and promotes our interest in the World. It causes us to propose such ends as are reasonable, and within our reach; it makes us cautious and prudent in our measures. It gives us Patience under the crosses and disappointments of the World, and encourages us to try contentedly again.

again. His Life is comfortable, his matters are managed with silence and discretion, his Mind is steddy, calm, and fit for business. But the Proud are high and lofty in their aims, furious in prosecution, and impatient of any rub. They propose more to themselves than they can compas, which baffles all their projects, and brings them to nothing in the end.

Secondly, Again, Humility naturally tends to *Honour*, Wisdom and Steddiness; Patience and an even prudent managery are so seldom seen, that they never fail to procure esteem and a fair reputation in the World. Those things have a lustre in them, which by a necessary efficacy, like the Sun it self, dazzle the sight, and charm the spirits of all Men.

Thirdly, and *lastly*, Humility naturally tends to *Health*, and prolongs our Life. Pride and solicitude, Envy and desire unsatisfied, nourish a continual Passion, exhaust the Spirits, disquiet sleep, and so destroy the Health and Life of many. As *Themistocles* says Plut. of himself, *that the Victory and Trophies of Miltiades, interrupted his Peace, and would not suffer him to take his rest*. But an humble indifference, a meek and a chearful temper, is the Fountain

of all tranquillity and pleasure : his Spirits do not rage, and boil, and overset the Body ; his rest is sweet, his Mind is free, neither empty of all design, nor pressed down with care. He has business enough to employ his thoughts, leisure enough to regard himself, content and quiet under all events. And thus by natural causality, *From Humility, &c.*

(2.) Again, By an *efficacy moral* ; Humility disposes kindly to all these several ends, because it conciliates the good opinion of all Men. The designs of the humble are modest, and therefore he uses no indirect provoking Arts to attain his Worldly ends. He builds a Fortune upon no Man's ruine ; he is fair and upright in all his dealings, candid and ingenuous, without design or trick, which irresistably gain the good-will of all. Every one will be his Friend, ready to assist him, advise him, inform him of any design that is upon him, or of any good that may be in his way. And indeed a stock in the favour and good-will of our Neighbour, may prove the best estate in this uncertain World.

(3.) And lastly, By an *efficacy Divine and Spiritual* ; The Blessing of God will attend the humble, and so dispose and order second Causes,

Causes, that they shall live in Plenty, Peace, and Honour, to a good old Age. An humble compliance with the will of God, Content in our Station, Gratitude for Benefits received, Patience and Self-denial under cross Events, dispose, in their nature, to the Favour and Love of God, the Governour of the World. He cannot but be pleas'd with those that comply with his Providence, and promote his own Designs. And therefore *upon whom shall I rest*, says God, *but upon him that is of an humble and a contrite spirit?* *Humility is a Bed of Repose and Pleasure to God himself*, is St. Augustine's Note upon the place. And though the Lord be high, yet he hath respect to the lowly, but beholdeth the proud afar off, Ps. 138. 6. The Proud are in a manner out of his sight; but the humble are under his particular care and providence. And therefore *the meek shall inherit the Earth*, Matth. 5. *They shall have wisdom and counsel*, Prov. 11. 2. *They shall be exalted*, Luk. 1. 52. *They shall have rest and tranquillity in all conditions*, Matt. 11. ult. But pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall, Prov. 16. 18. *Tollitur altissime, ut majori casuram*. And thus, *By humility, and the fear of the Lord, are riches, and honour, and life*, as well in

in the Nature and Reason of the thing, as by the special Promises of God.

Use. It now remains that we earnestly endeavour to accomplish our Souls with this so useful, so advantagious a Virtue. You see it is every way your Interest, as well as it is your Duty : Pride is a vain and empty Satisfaction, a continual Disappointment ; but Humility is a sure Foundation of Riches, and Honour, and Life. Pride would fain be great but cannot ; but Humility is indifferent, and is therefore courted by the World, it follows it, and offers it self unto it. If you say, that Pride is so natural to us, that it is impossible to be rooted out; that it has so obtained in the World, that no Man with any Decency or Reputation can lay it now aside. The Answer is this, that if it were impossible, it could not be made a Duty : the truth is, the Desire of a more perfect State, to strive after greater Excellencies, than we have, the Emulation of virtuous and lovely Qualities : These are the true dispositions and genuine Inclinations of humane Nature ; but the Vice of Pride is unnatural and wholly foreign to us : it would be esteem'd for that which it has not, it would be rewarded for that which it deserves not, it

is a Complication of Immoralities, Rebellion against the Providence of God, Detraction, Envy, Malice, and vain Imagination. This, to be sure, is a Disease we have brought upon our Selves; we love the Vice, we nourish the Distemper, we force our Nature to it, and vainly hope, to come off at last by pleading a Necessity. But did you ever endeavour to cure this Malady in earnest? did you ever use the proper Means? did you ever consider how little reason you had to be proud or haughty? what a miserable imperfect Being the best of us is, how insufficient, how dependent? St. James persuades to Humility from hence, *That we are all subject to God,* (c.4. v. 7.) *And what have you, says St. Paul, that you have not received?* If you receiv'd it, why do ye glory? Nay, even that, that we have received, and is so precarious, so intirely at the will of another, is so little in it self, so fading and imperfect, that it is no Foundation of Conceit or Haughtiness. *For we are nothing but soreness and corruption,* says the Prophet. *Sordet in conspectu Judicis, quod fulget in conspectu operantis,* says the Father. It is well that there remains a more perfect State hereafter for us, who never attain to so great a Perfection of our Nature

Nature here, as other Beings do in theirs. What is our Beauty ? it is commonly mistaken, especially by our Selves ; but where indeed it is, the Shades do so hide the Light, that it generally spoils the Picture. The Flowers of the Field excel us : and what we have, is fading and inconstant ; there is no security in it, no propriety, and therefore the value of it is not great. Is it his Wisdom that a Man may value himself upon ? Which Wisdom ? That of Yesterday, or his present Sentiments ? For alas, a Man is so unstable, so inconsistent with himself, that his Principles, Opinions, and Institution of Life, are seldom the same many years together. There is always some byass or other that obstructs his Judgment, and hinders the free and proper motions of his Mind, which at the best are but imperfect. What is it then ? Is it Wealth and Power that puff us up ? But Power without Reason and Goodness, is a Whirlwind, a Tempest, Belluine Féocity, the degeneracy of humane nature : and as for the Power that is justly exercised, it is equally beneficial to the Subject, with the Prince, it equally secures them both in their Rights and Properties. The Power and Dominion of one Man over another, is at

at the best, but a necessary evil, brought into the World to restrain the exorbitant tempers of Men, and indeed most evil to those that exercise it. Does it not oblige them to a tedious attendance? are they not subject to distracting Cares, opprobrious Censures, dangerous Envy, treacherous Conspiracies, and frequent Dissolutions? Upon the matter then, there is nothing in a Man's Possession that is sufficient to elate his Mind? That that really commends him, is an humble sense of what he has attained, and an earnest endeavour to proceed and improve; this at the same time will both prevent the assuming Glory, and make you really deserving of it.

Finally, Set the Example of our blessed Saviour before your Eyes, who humbled himself to death upon the Cross for us. *Let us blush,* says the Father, *to be proud, for whom our Saviour is thus humbled.* We must needs be very underving Wretches, who so provoked the Almighty Justice, that nothing but the Blood of his Son could atone our guilt. These things, if well considered, would be sufficient to keep down all the ebullitions of a haughty Spirit; especially if we add to this, our constant Prayers to God for his assistance, who will be always

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ready to support our weakness, prevent temptation, facilitate our Victory, and bring us at last to that Happy State, where we shall all
Matt. 5. 3. be as great and glorious as we can desire. *For blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* To which God of his Mercy bring us all, for Jesus Christ his sake the Righteous, to whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour, Glory, Praise, Dominion and Obedience, now, and for Evermore. *Amen.*

E R R A T A.

P^Age 3, line 4, for *leaves* read *leads*, p. 6, l. 11, for *devoted t.* and *rooted,*
p. 12, l. 6, r. *Dic.*

F I N I S.

